REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-14 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 3, 4, and 7 have been amended hereby. Claims 2 and 15 have been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 7 has been amended to correct the typographical error pointed to in the Office Action at page 2. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of Claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as being obvious over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0047237 ("*Oshita*") in view of Japanese Patent Publication No. 2001-104645 ("*Tomizawa*").

Claims 2 and 15 have been cancelled, thereby rendering the rejection thereof moot.

Independent Claim 1 has been amended to recite "an optical disk drive unit which has a lid opening backwards and on which a detachable optical disk is loaded," "a planar region is provided at substantially a center of the rear face of the casing, and at least a part of the planar region constitutes the lid of the optical disk drive unit," and "curved shapes are formed symmetrically on both sides of the casing respectively so that fingers of the user gripping the casing placed along the curved shape make the tips of the fingers point away from the center of the lid of the optical disk drive unit."

Claim 1 specifically recites "a lid opening backwards" on "an optical disk drive unit on which a detachable disk is loaded." Generally, several options are available in providing a portable electronic device with an optical disk drive unit, in addition to the structure in which a lid opens backwards. For example, a tray for carrying a rotating optical disk may be slidable in and out of the casing, or an optical disk may be inserted into a slot provided in the casing. Of these options, a lid which opens backwards is positively recited in the embodiment of Claim 1.

Vibration and shock during the operation of a portable electronic device with a rotating optical disk should be addressed properly because the disk is rotating while software is being read. With the embodiment of Claim 1, where the lid opens backwards, a read operation involving disk access may be adversely affected if a large force is applied by the user's fingertips in the direction of pushing the lid. Therefore, there is a desire to mitigate the force applied to the lid by the fingers of the user gripping the casing.

The embodiment of Claim 1 addresses this by providing a planar region at substantially a center of the rear face of the casing, and by placing an optical disk drive unit in the planar region so that at least a part of the planar region constitutes the lid of the optical disk drive unit. Further, curved shapes are formed symmetrically on both sides of the casing, respectively.

In the embodiment of Claim 3, an outer edge of each side of the casing includes each of the curve shapes formed as an arc shape. The arc shape fits to the curve formed by a palm of the user gripping the casing.

In the embodiment of Claim 4, a horizontally longitudinal cross section of the casing, which is substantially perpendicular to the rear face, is formed as a gentle curve. The gentle curve is slanted from the center of the casing to the left and right hand of the user.

In the aforementioned claimed embodiments, the user's fingers are flexed to fit the curved shape (that is, the arc shape or the gentle curve) while gripping the casing, ensuring that the user's fingertips are less likely to touch the lid of the optical disk drive unit located in the planar region.

Accordingly, the force applied to the lid of the optical disk drive unit during the operation is advantageously reduced according to the invention of claim 1.

While *Oshita* may show bulges protruding from back side of an elongated housing, it fails to teach or suggest the curved shapes recited in Claim 1. Further, the device of *Oshita* does not appear to be provided with a lid so that the aforementioned problem need not be addressed. They are also gripped in different ways. The user grips the casing of the present invention by covering (or flexing) the curved shapes with the fingers of the user. In contrast, as shown in Fig. 4, the device of *Oshita* is held by sandwiching the housing with the thumb and another finger (particularly, the forefinger). As the game device of *Oshita* is held in this way, the user has to support the weight of the device with the tip of the finger. Consequently, the force applied to the back of the device cannot be reduced. Thus, *Oshita* fails to teach or suggest that the user's fingers are naturally flexed to fit the curved shapes, ensuring that the user's finger remains at a distance from the planar region and is less likely to touch the lid of the optical disk drive unit. Assuming *arguendo* that an optical disk drive unit with a lid is carried in the game device described in *Oshita* without any modifications, it would result in the user's finger repeatedly hitting the lid as the user grips the housing while playing, thereby applying shock to the device, or the lid being pressed hard repeatedly.

In contrast with the invention recited in Claim 1, *Oshita* fails to teach or suggest the aforementioned solution to the issue unique to a portable electronic device provided with an optical disk drive unit, and the layout of an optical disk drive unit with curved shapes.

It is respectfully submitted that the other cited references, alone or in combination, fail to cure the deficiencies of Oshita.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent Claim 1, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentably distinct over the cited art.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

/Pedro C. Fernandez/
Pedro C. Fernandez
Reg. No. 41,741

CUSTOMER NUMBER 026304

Telephone: (212) 940-6311
Fax: (212) 940-8986
Docket No.: SCEP 22.456 (100809-00319)

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